

Jeff Firzlaff
3064 Powell Rd.
Kent, OH 44240
ATJeff@aol.com
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I believe the merger between XM and Sirius would benefit many. The only item I would like to see addressed is sound quality on both services. XM and Sirius can sound very good and have sounded very good in the past. I subscribe to both services, and unfortunately, both have made the decision to add channels at the sacrifice of sound quality. Both services started with fewer channels and good sound quality. I believe both services have added to many channels at the sacrifice of sound quality. I believe a mandatory minimum level of service should be required. Specifically, a frequency response of no less than 20 – 15 kHz, which would match current analog FM broadcast standards, and true stereo reproduction, not a combining left and right program information to mono at frequencies above a certain point. Compression and frequency equalization should also be minimized. Along with the response and stereo specifications, a minimum bit rate should also be established for music and talk channels. That minimum should be set to minimize artifacts common with compressed music. As we transition to all digital broadcasting, I feel it is important to set minimum quality standards. The XM and Sirius merger is a prime opportunity to set these standards.

Sincerely,

Jeff Firzlaff